

PUBLIC NOTICE



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COMMON CARRIER BUREAU RELEASES REVISED LIST OF CARRIERS FILING RURAL CERTIFICATION LETTERS AND NOTIFICATIONS OF CHANGES IN STATUS

CC Docket No. 96-45

On October 21, 1999, the Commission required rural carriers serving study areas with more than 100,000 access lines to file certification letters by July 1, 2000.¹ The Commission required such carriers to explain how they meet the criteria set forth in the definition of “rural telephone company” in section 153(37) of the Communications Act, as amended.² Specifically, the Commission required a carrier self-certifying as a rural telephone company as defined in section 153(37)(A) to include a description of the study areas in which it provides service and the basis for its assertion that it meets the requirements of this subsection.³ Similarly, the Commission required a carrier self-certifying as a rural telephone company as defined in section 153(37)(D) to include a list of all communities to which it provides service, the population of those communities, the number of its access lines serving those communities, and the total

¹ See *Federal-State Joint Board on Universal Service, Forward-Looking Mechanism for High Cost Support for Non-Rural LECs*, CC Docket Nos. 96-45, 97-160, Tenth Report and Order, 14 FCC Rcd 20156, 20350-58 (1999) (*Tenth Report and Order*).

² See 47 U.S.C. § 153(37). The Commission determined that it could easily determine whether a carrier satisfies the criteria in subsections 153(37)(B) or (C) and only required additional information if the carrier claims rural status under the criteria in subsection 153(37)(A) or (D). Section 153(37)(B) provides that a local exchange carrier operating entity is deemed a rural telephone company to the extent that such entity “provides telephone service, including exchange access, to fewer than 50,000 access lines.” Section 153(37)(C) provides that a local exchange carrier operating entity is deemed a rural telephone company to the extent that such entity “provides telephone exchange service to any local exchange carrier study area with fewer than 100,000 access lines. Thus, a carrier serving study areas with more than 100,000 access lines could not, by definition, meet the criteria set forth in section 153(37)(B) or (C). See *Tenth Report and Order*, 14 FCC Rcd at 20354.

³ Section 153(37)(A) provides that a local exchange carrier operating entity is deemed a rural telephone company to the extent that such entity – “provides common carrier service to any local exchange carrier study area that does not include either – (i) any incorporated place of 10,000 inhabitants or more, or any part thereof, based on the most recently available population statistics of the Bureau of the Census; or (ii) any territory, incorporated or unincorporated, included in an urbanized area, as defined by the Bureau of the Census as of August 10, 1993.” 47 U.S.C. § 153(37)(A). See also *Tenth Report and Order*, 14 FCC Rcd at 20354-55.

number of access lines it serves.⁴ In subsequent years, carriers serving study areas with more than 100,000 access lines need only file certification letters if their status changes.⁵

On August 1, 2000, the Common Carrier Bureau released a list of carriers filing rural certification letters, which inadvertently omitted Citizens Telecommunications of California.⁶ The following revised list indicates those carriers filing rural certification letters stating they meet the criteria in section 153(37)(D):⁷

ALLTEL Arkansas
ALLTEL Carolina (North)
ALLTEL Georgia
ALLTEL New York
ALLTEL Pennsylvania
Western Reserve Telephone Company (ALLTEL)

CenturyTel of Washington

Citizens Telecommunications Company of California
Citizens Telecommunications Company of New York

Commonwealth Telephone Company (Pennsylvania)

Concord Telephone Company (North Carolina)

Frontier Communications of Minnesota

GTE Arkansas (Contel)
GTE Kentucky (Contel)
GTE Midwest – Iowa
GTE Northwest – Idaho

Carolina Telephone and Telegraph (Sprint – North Carolina)
Central Telephone Company (North Carolina Division – Sprint)
Central Telephone Company of Texas (Sprint)
Central Telephone Company of Virginia (Sprint)
Sprint-Florida
Sprint Minnesota

⁴ Section 153(37)(D) provides that a local exchange carrier operating entity is deemed a rural telephone company to the extent that such entity – “has less than 15 percent of its access lines in communities of more than 50,000 on the date of enactment of the Telecommunications Act of 1996.” 47 U.S.C. § 153(37)(D). *See also Tenth Report and Order*, 14 FCC Rcd at 20358.

⁵ *Tenth Report and Order*, 14 FCC Rcd at 20352, 20355.

⁶ *Common Carrier Bureau Releases List of Carriers Filing Rural Certification Letters and Notifications of Changes in Status*, Public Notice, CC Docket No. 96-45, DA 001705 (rel. Aug. 1, 2000).

⁷ No carrier serving more than 100,000 access lines filed a certification stating that it met the criteria in section 153(37)(A).

Sprint Missouri
United Telephone Company of the Carolinas (Sprint – South Carolina)
United Telephone Company of Indiana (Sprint)
United Telephone Company of Kansas (Sprint)
United Telephone Company of Eastern Kansas (Sprint)
United Telephone Company of Southcentral Kansas (Sprint)
United Telephone Company of Southeastern Kansas (Sprint)
United Telephone Company of New Jersey (Sprint)
United Telephone Company of the Northwest (Sprint Washington and Oregon)
United Telephone Company of Ohio (Sprint)
United Telephone Company of Pennsylvania (Sprint)
United Telephone Company – Southeast (Sprint Tennessee and Virginia)
United Telephone Company of Texas (Sprint)
United Telephone Company of the West (Sprint Wyoming and Nebraska)

TXU Communications Telephone Company (Lufkin-Conroe Telephone Exchange)

Valor Telecommunications of New Mexico
Valor Telecommunications of Texas

In addition, GTE Northwest – Washington (Contel), filed a letter notifying the Commission that it now has more than 100,000 access lines and its status has changed from a rural telephone company to a non-rural company. We also note that ALLTEL did not file a rural certification letter for ALLTEL Ohio, so we anticipate that ALLTEL Ohio will be treated as a non-rural company for federal universal service purposes beginning in the year 2001.

These certification and notification letters have been filed with the Secretary and placed on the record in CC Docket No. 96-45.

The full text of these letters and this document are available for public inspection and copying during regular business hours at the FCC Reference Information Center, Portals II, 445 12th Street, SW, Room CY-A257, Washington, DC, 20554. This document may also be purchased from the Commission's copy contractor, International Transcription Service, Inc. (ITS), 1231 20th Street, NW, Washington, DC 20036, telephone 202-857-3800, facsimile 202-857-3805.

For further information, contact Katie King, Accounting Policy Division, Common Carrier Bureau, at (202) 418-7400, TTY (202) 418-0484.